

Notes of the 67th meeting of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Chairs Meeting held at the Gurkha Museum on 4th March 2024

Present:

Charles Harris	Area Chair (CAST)
Pam Weir	Arts Volunteering Winchester
Tony Strachan	Arts Society Trustee
Joe Little	AS Training and Contents Manager
Pat Hindley	Hon. Treasurer incoming
Simon Reynier	Website Manager
Lucy Tew	H&IOW Spring Series Organiser
Diana Heatly	Secretary
Jane Hutchence	Liaison

plus 31 Chairs and representatives from 17 Hampshire and Isle of Wight Societies

Apologies:

Vanessa McMahon (Alton), Ali Green (CAST Education) and Margaret Hind (Test Valley).

NOTE OF THE MEETING

1. Welcome

- All
- Guest: Pam Meir
- Guest: Tony Strachan, AS Trustee
- Joe Little As Training and Contents Manager

2. Minutes of the 66th Area Meeting held on 2nd October 2023. Agreed.

Matters arising: None.

3. CASTS update:

Chair: You've all been sent my Chair's Update. I'm not going to bore you with reading it out, especially as there is much to get through before lunch. But I am going to make good on a promise made in my Report.

Two quick announcements about future events: in October, in addition to our usual Area Meeting, we are inviting **ex-Chairs** to a thank-you lunch right here in this room. A Gurkha Curry, an entertaining lecture, and a chance to catch up with former colleagues. Details are close to being finalised. This lunch is intended to be a completely **social** occasion, and you will not be charged for it. It will be free for up to 3 past chairs of **each** society in our Area. Diana Heatly will liaise with you in due course. The 2nd announcement is also about a social event – next summer, 2025. Sometime in May, June, or early July we want to have an All-Committee Outing, a day long visit to The Hawk Conservancy near Andover. And we will invite the **entire** committee of each society to attend. There will **not** be a business agenda, only a

schedule of events. We know you will want to talk amongst yourselves, as you always do...and that's the point. We will have a special venue within the grounds with a balcony overlooking a bird display arena. Coffee, lunch, a chance to meet a hawk on the end of your arm, a talk about birds, and birds in art. Such a day cannot be free of charge. Again, Diana Heatly will correspond. Getting the numbers right will be important in getting the costings right. Being a year away, there's plenty of time to make your views known.

Our Special Interest Days are proving popular once again. Especially, 'The Jean Bolton Series' in the Autumn. 25 years and growing stronger, it provides a valuable contribution to the Grants we offer you for local arts projects across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. This year, all 5 days were run entirely on Zoom.

The Spring Series is a different animal, but we're starting to promote it as heavily as we dare with updated MailChimp's and poster graphics and PPT slides for you to use at your lecture venues. Our extensive online database has been very useful for building an impressive audience for ZOOM and Zoom recordings.

Treasurer: Pat asked if there were any questions about her report and the financial figures? There were none.

Website: Simon Reynier: Please could societies send links to SIDs and Trips, to share with neighbouring societies for posting on the Area website.

4. Presentations:

a) Pam Meir: Gave an insightful talk on Arts Volunteering. The need for to promote creativity in Young People. She focused on the value of Partnership and gave an illuminating example of how she put this into practice with Hampshire Music Service using three different approaches.

a) Gifted and talented children, who composed a 'Suite in A minor' for a Flute choir, which was performed at a concert. The cue was Paul Nash's painting, 'We are making a New World'. Each soloist was invited to link their piece with images to resonate with what they were playing. These were projected throughout the concert.

b) The whole of year 9 children: the story was 'Seasons of Splendour' by Madhur Jaffrey, the music was percussion instruments from Barton Peverell school were used to produce Gamelan music, and the children made and worked Indonesian shadow puppets - source: 'Inside the Puppet Box' by Felizia Katz-Harris.

c) Pre GCSE secondary school group (Henry Beaufort). The students were read a poem, 'Dying slowly' by Pablo Neruda, chosen by Pam. They were broken up into groups and given a stanza and asked to produce a musical composition, assisted by a composer, over ten weeks. This was performed in a school concert.

Pam spoke about the process, including the funding, the opportunity given to these youngsters. She reiterated the value of working in partnership of working with Shaun Richie of Hampshire Music Service.

Pam concluded by putting forward an idea for the local societies to use with their Arts Volunteering: a partnership with Hampshire Music Service and the topic would be the Winchester Silk Mill.

- b) Tony Strachan:** 'To Reform or not to Reform' with reference to the recent document about the future governance structure of The Arts. In future, it is proposed that appointments to the Board will be offered to match skill mix required, which means they may not be a member.

He spoke about the 20% loss of membership resulting in an increase in cost. The charitable objective is 'Promoting Art', how to ensure the long-term future of the Society? How to reach audiences not in our catchment. The plan is to set up an Art Society studio and provide art through social media, targeting 35–55-year-olds. This will be funded through monies from Guilford House. The services to the societies will continue and in 2025 the service recharge will drop from £15.90 to £14.50. The Extraordinary General Meeting will take place on April 15th. Consultation zooms have been taking place. The Board meets on March 15th to finalise the resolution to be voted on by each society.

Q&A:

Loss of power of societies on the Board? The votes that would be lost are for accounts and Trustees. The numbers of responses have been dwindling for some time now.

Looking for Charitable contributions? Yes, by introducing a product to access the arts they are looking for funding from charities and Family Trusts.

AS is keen to promote bursaries, one example was for supporting someone interested in furniture restoration, who now works for the National Trust.

Don't forget community grants from AS.

- 5. Society chairs 2 minutes Update:** Topics ranged from problems with lecturers confirming contracts in reasonable time (there are 7 lecturers based in Hampshire). The continuation of Art in the Station project and the significance of the 200th anniversary of the Railways in 2025. Visitors packs (don't forget to include the free merchandising at the Arts Society, online). Problems with recruiting new committee members. The Peggy Guggenheim exhibition at Petersfield Museum see their website for details. Exhibits being loaned from Venice. Local AS members volunteering as stewards. The enthusiasm generated for society visits to local cinema to see live streaming of theatre, ballet and opera productions. 3 artworks are being submitted from Peter Symonds (Winchester) to the National Artworks competition. One society moved their new members' coffee morning venue to a coffee/crafts shop. Putting up their banner outside to identify the location attracted extra new members.

6. Lunch

7. Joe Little.

He demonstrated the Training site on the Arts Society website: training@theartsociety.org. He showed us the training courses available online for societies. You do NOT need a password to access this site.

Joe is currently running an online course about using Facebook. It is a useful social media platform that is used by half our members (a third of FB users are over the age of 44 years old). He spoke about the free marketing available for your society through using Facebook. There was a discussion about different types of social media and how they would suit our members, for example linking FB with Instagram.

Joe spoke about the Arts Society website and how each of the societies has a slot on it; If someone is looking for a society near them for example. He encouraged societies to develop their site. You could start simply by adding a link to your own website.

He reminded us about the promotional materials available from the online 'Promotional Materials and Retail' site. Some are free and a useful resource for visitor packs.

One question at the end was about the rising cost of membership fees. Tony said that on the continent, societies are inviting local businesses to sponsor them.

One society has a successful income from selling second-hand books and running raffles, which helps keep the subscription cost down.

8. Any Other Business

None.

9. Date of Next Area Meeting: Monday 7th October 2024 (please add to your diary).